

BHEW Bulletin

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Gender Differences in Depression in Missouri Youth



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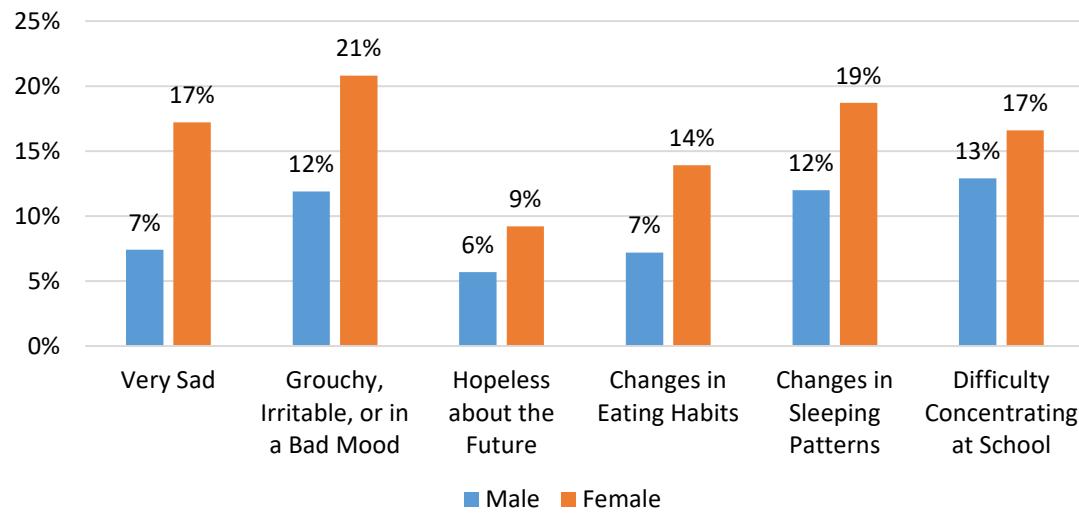


Depression, or Major Depressive Disorder, is a medical illness that can interfere with one's ability to handle daily activities, such as sleeping, eating, or managing work. While depression can happen at any age, symptoms most often begin in the teenage years or early adulthood.¹ In Missouri, around 11.5% of youth age 12-17 experienced depression in the past year.²

Symptoms of depression in youth can include:

- Feeling very sad
- Feeling grouchy, irritable, or in a bad mood
- Feeling hopeless about the future
- Eating too much or not eating enough
- Sleeping too much or not sleeping enough
- Difficulty concentrating at school

Overall, depression occurs at a higher rate in females than in males. Around 19.4% of female youth experience depression compared to 6.4% of males nationwide.³ In Missouri, female youth report much higher rates of depressive symptoms than male youth.⁴ Over 20% of females reported feeling grouchy, irritable, or in a bad mood during the past 30 days compared to about 12% of males. Similarly, females reported feeling very sad at twice the rate of males (17% and 7%, respectively). More details can be found in the chart below.



¹ National Institute of Mental Health, 2018.

² Missouri Behavioral Health Barometer, Volume 4, 2017.

³ National Institute of Mental Health, 2017.

⁴ Missouri Student Survey, 2018.